

**** INFORMATION PAGE ****

ALL A.C.W. MONIES -- Affiliation Fees, Fellowship Of The Least Coin, Newsette Subscriptions, Offertories for Special Days and Donations to be sent to the TREASURER:

Mrs Helen Richardson
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(Tel: 9971 0278).

PLEASE NOTE:

- ⇒ For safety reasons **DO NOT** include the word "Treasurer" when addressing envelopes.
- ⇒ **ALL CHEQUES** to be made payable to "Australian Church Women NSW Unit Inc." and **NOT** to any individual person.

FEES from AFFILIATED GROUPS are due 1st March each year as follows:

Denominational Groups:	\$25.00 per annum
A.C.W. Local Branches:	\$15.00 per annum
Organisations:	\$15.00 per annum
WCTU	
The Girls' Brigade	

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS' FEES due 1st March: \$10.00 per annum
(includes subscription to Newsette)

NEWSETTE is the journal of the NSW State Unit of Australian Church Women and is published four times a year in February, May, August and November. Annual Subscription is \$5.00.

CONTRIBUTIONS to Newsette are requested from readers and should be sent to the EDITOR:

Mrs Beryl McLaughlin,
2/15 Morwick Street,
STRATHFIELD 2135,
(Tel: 9744.8609).

Changes of Address should be sent to the Newsette MANAGER:

Mrs Nola Dickson,
1/14 Forest Grove,
EPPING 2121.
(Tel: 9869.2559)



NEWSETTE

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN -- NSW UNIT INC

A C W seeks:

- ⇒ to unite Australian churchwomen in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;
- ⇒ to provide opportunities for Christian women of different denominations to worship, study and serve together.

Mission Statement

Australian Church Women believe that there is one God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit; one God, Three-In-One. We believe that Scripture teaches that salvation is only through faith in the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's only Son.

PRESIDENT: Major Lyn Middleton Tel: 9529 6744

NUMBER 102

FEBRUARY 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My Dear Friends,

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart. This is the first line of the hymn inscribed on the January page of my office calendar. There could be no better counsel at the beginning of a new year than to fix our gaze on our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, our Hope and our Salvation. As the incumbent president of ACW NSW Unit Inc. I ask, "What are my hopes and aspirations for this new year? Simply put, they are that Christ may be our vision. Not in any sense of an apparition but in the sense that all that we plan and all that we do, all that we think and all that we say, will be illuminated by the life and teaching of Christ. I pray that our minds will be so stayed on Christ that He will be the central focus of all we share in ministry and fellowship together.

Shocked and saddened as we all were by the Tsunami which ravaged our near neighbours of South East Asia on Boxing Day, I found myself being drawn to the passage in Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 8 and verses 18-25. We live in a fallen world, one in which the whole of creation was

2.

affected by the Fall (v.20). Physically we inhabit an unstable planet. Spiritually we see men and women being blown about by 'every wave of doctrine'. When God finished the Creation it was a good Creation (Gen 1.21). Today it is a groaning Creation (Rom 8:22). On Boxing Day I believe the whole of creation groaned!

I could only glory in God when I reflected that just the day before we had been celebrating how God, who is Love, and wanting to redeem his fallen world, had sent his own son into this world to be its Saviour. A Saviour whose name would also be called *Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace* (Is.9:6). Jesus came to earth with the divine charge to *Comfort, comfort my people* (Is.41:1). At a time when the world most needed a counsellor, a comforter and friend, God had already provided!

Before Jesus left this world he promised us *another Comforter*, the Holy Spirit, who today comes alongside us *with strength* according to our need. May we daily know the comforting presence of the Holy Spirit within our lives so that with the hand of faith we can reach out to others to bring comfort and hope.

May you know a happy and holy New Year! *Sincerely, Lyn Middleton*

AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN NSW UNIT
ANNUAL SERVICE OF DEDICATION
MONDAY, MAY 16th 2005 at 10.30 am
THE SALVATION ARMY CITADEL CHATSWOOD
(Cnr Johnson & Archer Streets)

Transport: Bus 267 Stand K Chatswood Interchange
(near Chatswood Station) at 9.36, 10.06 am

Followed by fellowship over Light Lunch

STATE COUNCIL:

2005 Council Meetings will continue to be held at the Uniting Church Offices, Piccadilly Court, 222 Pitt Street, Sydney.

The February 21st meeting will be held on Level 9. All other meetings will be on Level 10.

All Executive Meetings will be on Level 9.

3.

MULTI-FAITH SERVICE AND THE TSUNAMI DISASTER:

On Wednesday evening 5 January 2005 Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus and Buddhists gathered in the Sydney Town Hall to offer prayers following the tsunami which struck on 26 December 2004. It was an occasion of deep reflection and hope, and I found it was helpful to be there to share with so many. Australian Church Women members were in the crowd - mindful that partners in Asian Church Women's Conference are in most of the countries that have been so badly affected.

In response to a message sent on behalf of Australian Church Women, *Shu Wen Chiang*, Executive Secretary of ACWC, has thanked us for our thoughts and prayers. *Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Bangladesh and Myanmar* are all member countries and reports have been coming in from these places. Among those whose messages have come through to us is one from *Padma Ebenezer*, though faulty transmission meant that only some of what she sent was readable. Padma told of the loss of possessions and damage to buildings, while expressing thanks that members of the church she was reporting on had sustained injuries but no lives were lost.

We need to continue to hold these people in our prayers and give generously in whatever way we can to alleviate the suffering and loss.

Isabel Hewitt, State Secretary

ASIAN CHURCH WOMEN'S CONFERENCE:

Letter from *Annamaney Arumanayagam* in Malaysia...30 December 2004
"It is with a heavy heart that many of us greet the New Year. The Quake-Tsunami which hit Asia dramatically changed the landscape of many countries and affected the lives of millions of people. In Malaysia, our anguished Prime Minister has called off all New Year celebrations as this is not the time to be merry. Instead he directed that all government-organised celebrations be replaced by prayers for the tsunami victims. A fitting reminder at such a time.

Within the ACWC, out of the 10 countries affected by this disaster, 7 are member countries - Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Myanmar, the other affected countries being the Maldives, the Seychelles, Somalia. In some countries the devastation is unbelievable and the loss of lives run into tens of thousands. Other countries have also been affected as there were many who were working or holidaying in Thailand, Indonesia, India or Sri Lanka. The grieving goes on.

I know that in each of these countries the Church is in the forefront,

4.

offering aid and relief. The National Council of Churches in India was the first to send out a letter of appeal. In Indonesia, the CCI is open 24 hours to collect food, clothes, medicine and other aid for the people in Aceh. Our ACWC National Representative, *Rosmalia Barus* keeps us updated (read her Email below). In Malaysia the Council of Churches is collecting clothes and money for relief. The ACWC immediately sent a sum of US\$100 as a token of our solidarity to the countries badly affected.

In the midst of all these sadness and pain, the message of God's love and the peace that passes all understanding becomes more meaningful. Millions have been displaced or have lost their homes. Thousands lost their entire families. Thousands upon thousands died unprepared. This is a sobering thought. It is a time to grieve; it is also a time to thank God for the wonderful gift of salvation - we need not be unprepared.

And so, as we welcome the New Year in our different ways, let us look back with gratitude; let us look forward in faith, and let us look up in thankfulness to the God who made, loves and redeemed us.

Wishing you God's Presence, Peace and Joy everyday in the New Year.
Your sister in Christ, *Annam*

(Email to *Annam* from ACWC representative in Indonesia as mentioned in above letter)

Dear Annam

Thank you for your prayer and sympathies. In my mind, it was very difficult to say something about that. Thousands people were died and all people in Indonesia show their solidarity. But this morning I know that in some area it was very difficult to send things like food, clothes, milk etc. for them. There are no transportation, no communication. And I just hear that in some places did not want to receive the food, clothes etc from Christian people. This information make me sad cause so many women and children no food, no water since 3 days ago. But we try again to do something to help them. Please pray for us.

Thanks Annam, merry Christmas, Rosmalia Barus.

(*Rosmalia* works with the CCI (Christian Council of Indonesia) which is open 24 hours to receive aid for the people of Aceh)

CORRECTIONS to November 2004 Newsette.

The Bible Society has not yet affiliated with ACW as stated, but has given expressions of interest.

The FLC Budget for 2005 should have read \$334,000 not \$3,33400 as shown. The Editor apologises for these incorrect items.

5.

UPDATE ON Dr ANNIE WHYBOURNE In SIERRA LEONE:

Annie usually works in Darwin as a paediatrician, caring for a wide range of children from many ethnic backgrounds, including Indigenous children from remote communities, who suffer from some very serious "undeveloped world" health problems. She recently spent 6 months as a volunteer with the non-government French organisation "Medecins Sans Frontieres" (Doctors Without Borders) as part of a six person "expatriate" team, running a 50-bed paediatric ward and a 25-bed malnutrition ward in a rudimentary bush hospital in Kailahun, eastern Sierra Leone, which was established some 2 years ago. Much of the infrastructure of Sierra Leone was destroyed and many innocent villagers were murdered, raped or maimed during the 10 years of civil war which ended in 2001. Kailahun, which was a large and prosperous town prior to the war, was the central focus for the RUF (Revolutionary United Front) and hence was severely battered. Many of the local folk fled into nearby Guinea or Liberia, both very unstable countries themselves, and lived for several years in refugee camps. Services were re-introduced into Kailahun at the beginning of 2002 overseen by UN peacekeepers and by NGO'S such as MSF, Oxfam and Action Contre Le Faim.

The children coming to the hospital were often carried by their mothers on their backs for more than 20 kms through ancient jungle paths, and the children were often seriously unwell. The hospital was very busy with some 350 admissions per month. The most common illness was malaria, which can kill children within 24 hours if left untreated. The children often were suffering from pneumonia, malnutrition, diarrhoea, typhoid fever and gut parasites as well. The death rate was high, with some 10-12 children dying per month, usually under 3 years of age. The hospital was extremely well-equipped with medications and equipment by MSF, and staffed by well-trained and hard-working community medical officers, nurses and nursing aides. Annie had an excellent translator by her side most of the working day. The supportive logistic staff, managed by Dr Annie's partner, *Daniel Baschiera*, made sure that the hospital kept running with generator-powered electric light and oxygen, clean water, waste disposal and good sanitation.

Working in Kailahun was a most remarkable experience. Annie and Daniel observed the amazing depth of resilience in people who have lived through the most awful atrocities and deprivations for many years. The hospital was so often resounding with chatter and laughter, and the women were very supportive of each other. The community is 50% Christian and 50% Muslim, and the two groups live in harmony, even intermarrying! The community was always busy, rebuilding houses, planting crops and re-establishing family lives.

(Reported by Dr Annie's mother, Mina Whybourne, past WKS Convener)



Fellowship Of The Least Coin

FLC GRANTS ALLOCATED FOR PROJECTS IN 2004

Africa

1. Health programme for women and their families, Bata, Equatorial Guinea - West Africa.
2. Achibo Women Group, Nyalenda 'B' sub location, Kolwa West Location, Kisumu District, Kenya.
3. Gamba Women Dairy Co-operative Project, Gamba community - Oyugis, Kenya

Asia

1. Women's Empowerment through education and training, Kowloon, Hong Kong, SAR.
2. A reflective liturgy for SCM women (this is a resource 'book for women students and members in all SCMs), WSCF-AP.
3. Hikari-No-Ko-Gakuen (pre-school for children with slow development in Christian mind). Kitakyuushu, Uukuokaken, Japan
4. Namyangjoo Women's Centre for migrant workers, Kyunggi-Do' South Korea.
5. Myanmar Council of Churches-WD Women Empowerment Project, Yangong, Myanmar
6. Overcoming violence against women: building communities of Shalom, Board of Women's Work-United Methodist Church, Philippines.
7. Shelter Project and Service Centre for domestic helpers and migrant workers, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Canada

1. 50th Canadian Students' Conference, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Europe

1. Adelheid Project, Wales, UK, August 2004
War, terrorism, women and religion, Europe. To bring women together with direct experience of terrorism and war. To develop strategies in overcoming violence

Latin America

1. Women's self-sufficiency through education and work, Carabayallo District of Lima, Peru.
Children growing together in peace, Medellin, Colombia

Latin America

1. Women's self-sufficiency through education and work, Carabayallo District of Lima, Peru.
2. Children growing together in peace, Medellin, Colombia
3. Women's Shelter, "Suma Jacana" "EL ALTO (Andean Mts) of Bolivia, City of La Paz, Bolivia
4. "Discovering My Freedom" migrant women's workshops, Buenos Aires and Mar Del Plata, Argentina
5. Presbyterian Mayan Fellowship Quetzaltenango, Guatemala - 5 Regions
6. Nutritional and Life Training Skills in Mocomoco, Mocomoco, La Paz Bolivia

Middle East

1. Empowerment of Iraqi Women, Baghdad, Mosul Basra, Iraq
2. A draft law in domestic violence in Lebanon, phase 1, Beirut, Lebanon

3. A Women's Training and Awareness building in "sex education in early childhood" regional-Middle East region

4. Regional Workshop of Gender Awareness and Leadership Development, Greek Orthodox Church, Amman

Pacific Region

1. Women and Legacy of nuclear testing-Marshall Islands
2. Women Capacity Building, Patukae Community High School, Marovo Lagoon, Solomon Islands.

Church Women United USA

ABC/African-American Community Health Group, Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties, Central Coast, California

World Council of Churches - Women's Programme

1. Violence against women "On the Wings of a Dove" WCC Women's Programme— A world wide campaign against overcoming violence against women and children Thur 25 Nov - Mon 10-Dec 2004.
2. Women to Women Solidarity Visits in context of war and conflict in Sudan, WCC-Women's Programme

World Day of Prayer

In faith, Caribbean women shape the future, Bahamas

8.

WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP:

A new year has begun and so we now have new Winifred Kiek scholars to partner with.....2 for 2005. This news and greetings has come from the WKS Trustees in South Australia.

Siok Cheng Chew, from Malaysia, will be studying the Distance Education Advanced Certificate (Autism Study) provided by the University of Birmingham UK (Distance Education Unit). *Siok* is a member of the Methodist Chinese Church, Sibiu. She is currently a Special Education Teacher/Centre Supervisor and was nominated by the Board of Services For People With Disabilities in Sibiu. She will commence her studies in September 2005.

Anju Borgooary, from Assam, India, will be studying for a Post Graduate Diploma in Pastoral Counselling at Ananda Counselling Centre, Karnataka, India. *Anju* is a member of the Tukrajhar Baptist Church. She is currently a women's evangelist and speaks Assamese, Hindi and English. She will commence her studies in June 2005.

The Trustees are now seeking applicants from Multicultural Australia for the 2006 Scholarship - Christian women aged 25-40 years. The funding enables the recipient to undertake Theological Studies, Bible Studies or Religious Leadership Training, either within Australia or a neighbouring country for 2006 academic year only. It covers costs, travel and accommodation, if necessary, are provided. Application Forms are available and need to be returned to the Trustees by 31st May 2005.

2005 is the 40th year of the Winifred Kiek Scholarship, which we partner with prayerfully and with funding through the offertories from Fellowship Day Services in July.

Christmas cards and letters were sent to the 2003 Scholars, *Monique*, *Gaye* and *Susan*, and to our 2004 Scholar, *Mereani*. A lovely "newsy" reply came from *Gaye Inall* (Queensland). She is doing very well in her Deaf Ministry and her studies continue. She was exhausted on return from her UK trip (July) where she had opportunities to research, study and tour in her area of interest. Including the sightseeing, this was a trip of a lifetime and *Gaye* feels she has made lifelong friends, meeting so many other deaf people. She included a photo of herself with a Queen's Guard.

Mina Whybourne (past WKS Convener) received Christmas greetings from past Scholars *Nighat Gulzar* (Pakistan now USA) and *Doreen Tan* (nee *Tie*) from Kuching. Copies are available of any of the above - please contact me on 9896.3758. We have much to pray about.

Judith Cayzer, WKS Convener

WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP: (Continued)

The National WKS Convener, *Joan Tong*, has passed on the following letter from the 1990 Scholar, *Doreen Tie Chin Bing* (now *Doreen Tan*) and this will be of great interest to those who remember her and her time here in Sydney, and our contribution in enabling her with funding to set up the Toy Library which she planned as a means to bring the parents of the disabled and handicapped children into involvement with her school and to encourage them not to feel having such children shamed them.

"Dear Joan,

Many thanks for your letter and pamphlet updating me on what's going on at ACW. It is always encouraging to note that ACW continues to thrive forward in their mission, especially by offering scholarships. I am sure apart from me, there are countless of other scholars who not only brought back ideas for change but wonderful memories of life in Australia.

2004 marks another busy year for me at work. Our school just finished another fundraising project which netted RM66,000++ which was in fact the highest amount we ever earned so far. That was really great and everyone was all smiles. I Praise the Lord for that.

Recently, I was in Singapore with one of my teachers, attending the 8th World Down Syndrome Congress and at the same time visiting a few schools there. It was a very enriching experience for me and I hope to be able to implement some of the things I've learnt in my school setting. Attending conferences and visiting schools abroad now have a totally new meaning for me, as I have to see things from a management level as well and that's usually where the challenges lie. There'll be many more conferences/workshops coming up and I'll have to assign different staff to attend so that their skills are sharpened and together we can make a difference in the lives of the intellectually disabled under our care. It is amazing what a good workshop/seminar can do for the teachers. They come back excited and wishing to try out what they have learnt. I am always encouraged when I see them enthusiastic as their enthusiasm creates a better place of learning for the disabled. I have enclosed 2 brochures for your information about our school here.

Family wise ... my daughter Heather Ashley is now 8 and is doing well in school ... for which I am very pleased. She has taken her first ABSRM Grade 4 Practical exam in Music. Jordan is now 3½ and attending Agapeland Montessori. The teachers in the school are very happy with him and that's good news for us. My husband Philip has been very busy as his music students are sitting for their piano exams. He is rather stress to put it mildly. I am very glad to be able to write and update everyone on

10.

what's been happening. God is good to me and He has been Jehovah Jireh to me. Many opportunities have come my way and when I reach dead ends, He opened doors for me ... for which I have seen him work everything for the good for me. When I look back in my life, I see His hand continually guiding me even in the darkest moments of my life. Truly indeed He is a God who never leaves or forsakes us.

I trust that the vision that God has given to ACW will continue to live on, so that through your partnership with God great and wonderful things can be accomplished for the glory of His Name.

May His blessings be upon you all, Best wishes, Doreen."

(I have a copy of the brochure about her school that Doreen mentioned and would be happy to let anyone interested have a copy- Newsette Editor)

HAPPY RETIREMENT !!!

On Sunday 16 January 2005 at Dulwich Hill Salvation Army morning worship, *Majors Joan and David Tong* 'retired' after 40 years as officers. In keeping with what we would expect of Joan (our past State President) it was a fitting occasion - bright, friendly, reverent - but not lacking in humour. Can you believe that her school report would have said that she talked too much?? Joan has put this 'fault' to good use and we join in thanking her and David especially for the support they have given to ACW and ACWC over the years. We wish them God's blessing in retirement.

Isabel Hewitt, State Secretary

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER:

This Day held all around the world on the First Friday in March, in many places is sponsored by ACW branches. If anyone would like to know where there is a service near them, a list of venues is available from *Judith Baker* (9570.4001), our ACW Representative on the WDP Committee.

NSW ECUMENICAL COUNCIL:

The Council Meeting in November was held at the Community Centre in the Block at Redfern. It was an emotional day with a controversial subject. The theme was from John 10.10 "*I came that they may have life and have it abundantly*" The Aboriginals feel that they have the first part of this verse, but have yet to receive the second part - abundant life.

Leigh Bowden reported on her research following the riots following the death of Thomas James Hickey last April and the people she had

11.

interviewed. Then *Ali Golding* told her story. *Ali* now worships in the Catholic Church. She went to Nungalinga College in Darwin and received her Certificate in Theology. *Ali's* vision is a hall, with dirt floor, bare feet, where Aboriginals can worship the Creator God in their own way.

Rev Dr Jonathan Inkipin spoke on the Churches' Decade to Overcome Violence being run by National Council of Churches Australia, seeking reconciliation and peace. There was also a report of Churches Community Housing Ltd, the only 100% government-supported housing company in NSW. It offers affordable housing and now owns 115 plus properties with 250 units for accommodation.

Nola Dickson, ACW Representative to NSW Ecumenical Council

PAN PACIFIC & S.E.ASIA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION:

The October speaker was *Dr Eileen Pittaway*, known for her work with ANCORW (women refugees) and a member of the Asian Women's Human Rights Council. Her subject was *Beijing+10*. She was one of 120 members of the first Beijing Assembly in 1994. One result of that assembly was that rape in conflict is now a War Crime.

For Beijing+5 in 1999 an Assembly was held in New York, but it was apparent that the extreme right wing was determined to take control, an unholy alliance of secular, Christian and Muslim organisations aiming to destroy CEDAW (Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women).

In 2004, it was feared the power of the right wing, especially with the American Government, would undermine an Assembly. Therefore, it was decided instead to mark Beijing+10 by holding 'Caravans' (gatherings) around the world, where women could bring their concerns and discuss them, with the results to be presented to a Review of the Beijing Documents to be held in March 2005.

In Australia, 36 'Caravans' were held. National Council of Women NSW held one, with a large number of young women expressing their views. A Status of Women Workshop was held over 4 days at University of NSW and a set of issues was put together for the 2005 Review. A Regional Forum was held in Bangkok with over 60 countries represented - 820 women came, some of them had walked many miles to get to transport to take them to airports to board planes for Bangkok. These were not 'high-fliers', they were ordinary women - it was a 'grass-roots' gathering. The entire conference was documented and the results will be sent to the UN in New York.

Edith Ridge, ACW Representative to PPSEAWA